

## Local Schools



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# Meet Kenny Carpenter, Middle School SRO

MARCH 20TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Meet Kenny Carpenter, Middle School SRO

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Poplar Bluff R-I's newest school resource officer, Kenny Carpenter, completed his introductory presentations with the sixth grade last week at the Middle School.

Carpenter, who celebrated his 22nd anniversary with the Poplar Bluff Police Department on Monday, March 6, took the opportunity to further open the lines of communication with students.

“I depend on information from you,” Carpenter said to instructor Kelly Moore’s homeroom, the 16th class of his month-long tour. “Anything you know that protects safety—as far as faculty, staff and students are concerned—I expect you to come to me.”

He cited two incidents that he has been able to prevent this school year upon receiving information. Two weeks ago Carpenter, along with other emergency responders – both current and former, reportedly were able to help save a life as they resuscitated a victim who suffered a heart attack in her vehicle after dropping a student off at school.

Last week the woman, now with a pacemaker, exited her vehicle and hugged Carpenter while he was on morning traffic duty. “It was a touching moment yesterday,” Carpenter said to the students.

Carpenter, the father of two PBHS alumni and one current student, worked in the patrol

division his entire tenure until he transferred to the SRO post in November, when the school board approved his position. He graduated in 1994 from the Law Enforcement Academy at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau.

He received 40 hours of training for his school certification, which included topics such as youth mental health first aid. Missouri is one of 13 states to require additional training for SROs, according to Carpenter's presentation.

The district employs two other SROs: Officer Jason Courtney at Junior High and Cpl. Richard Knapp at the High School. In addition to law enforcement duties, their job is to serve as informal counselors/mentors for the student body. The first such school post in the United States was created in 1958 in Flint, Mich. According to a report from the National Center for Education Statistics, there were 28,550 SROs in 2015.

Pictured: Officer Kenny Carpenter is pictured in his centrally located office on the Middle School campus.

Article and photo submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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